

Love of A Spartan: Safe Harbor

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Summary: Another oneshot inspired by AshleyBurdick's "Love of A Spartan" universe. Further details inside. Rated for mild swearing. COMPLETE!

Love of A Spartan: Safe Harbor

Hello, all! I'm sorry I haven't written much recently, but I'm still toying with ideas for "Alaya's Song." I've also been working and paying off loans, in between trying to sleep for more than six hours. Anyways, this is another oneshot inspired by AshleyBurdick's "Love of A Spartan" universe. With the way the last few chapters have been going - and playing off the other oneshot I wrote - I could easily see this happening. Done for AshleyBurdick.

Disclaimer: I don't own Halo. Renee Kilburn belongs to AshleyBurdick.

Love Of A Spartan: Safe Harbor

****October 27, 2553****

****UNSC Reserve Base Camp Hayes****

****North America****

Laura (SPARTAN-000, codename: BLADE) watched from behind a building as the sounds of gunfire split the air. _Training range is busy today_, she mused as her eyes lit on one soldier in particular. Sergeant Renee Kilburn, fresh from Los Angeles, had spent the last two hours on the range, trying - and failing - to hit the center of her target. Oh, she was close, no doubt about that; every one of her shots was either a killshot or a serious injury. But, try as she might, she simply couldn't hit the bulls-eye. _Her problem's not accuracy_, she thought as she watched Kilburn reload yet another clip. _She's over-thinking her shot, and berating herself every time she misses the bulls-eye._ It was something she saw in a lot of Marines - left over from boot camp DIs and seasoned veterans. The

kind of people who would scream at you for the slightest mistake and leave you mentally scarred for life.

Silent as the ghosts of her past, Laura moved to stand behind Kilburn. The Marine was still firing, unaware of her presence - at least until the gun jammed. Laura smiled at the array of curses that split the air. _Definitely a Marine with that potty-mouth._

"That's one of many reasons why I hate using guns," she murmured, her voice pitched low. Kilburn whirled around and pointed the gun in her direction, and she chuckled. "Not to mention the BR-55 tends to jam during combat situations."

"Never had that problem in boot camp," Kilburn muttered sourly.

"You wouldn't - the ones you used were still being made early in the war, when we still had time to get things made right. Towards the end they started rushing out, and parts started to get substandard. May I?" Kilburn handed over the rifle and Laura fiddled with it for a moment. "In this case, the firing mechanism overheats and freezes up, and BLAM!" To punctuate her case, she loudly and quickly ejected the round, smirked, and returned the rifle.

"That was fast." Laura nodded at the sergeant's remark, staring downrange at the target Kilburn had been shooting at.

"It's a simple fix, and easy enough to prevent. The UNSC just refused to spend the additional money to get the job done. I'll show you how to clear it later, but for now..." She motioned to the target. "You've been at this for a while now, why? The guy's either dead or outta the fight."

"I can't hit the center. I'm doing everything by the book, leading my shot, aiming...why can't I hit the damn target?" _Good, she's getting mad - that'll help. _Laura held up her hand in an attempt to stall Kilburn's explanation.

"Not faulting your form, or the mechanics. Right now your shooting's a textbook example of Marine combat training." Turning away from the target, she eyed Renee Kilburn, taking in her stance, her build, and her determination: the same determination that had taken her to Zeta Doradus and back.

"No, you're doing everything right - but your mindset is all wrong. You can't just think about the shot, it's as much about _feeling_ it as it is thinking it. When the shot feels right..." pulling her sidearm, Laura whipped around and put a bullet in the center of the target, "...you'll get the target every time."

Kilburn's jaw dropped, and it was a moment before she could speak. "How did you do that?"

"Kid, you're already halfway there," Laura smiled. "It took me _years_ to get the accuracy you're at now. I remember sneaking out to an old abandoned barn off base to practice." She leaned in closer and whispered, "Between you and me, that's part of why I use knives all the time."

The two soldiers shared a wink and a grin, then Laura straightened up. "I'll fill you in more later. Right now, you should pack up and

get your butt down to the gym - I believe I owe you some hand-to-hand tips."

"Yes, ma'am. Be there on the double." Laura smirked and watched Kilburn move off; the girl had made strides since she'd come here. _Hard to believe she's the same girl that called me so many months ago, asking for my help_, she thought, flashing back to her trip to Florida.

"You wouldn't shoot me," he stated from the other end of her gun barrel.

"Watch me." Staring him dead in the eye, she flipped off the safety. "You know damn well that I'm crazed enough to try. And at this range, I won't miss." A look of disgust twisted her features. "I'd rather waste a round on you than ruin my knives."

"You'd really shoot me? You'd shoot a fellow Spartan?"

"If I had to. Frankly, I'm shocked you even tried to go after, considering that you're the one who threw her aside in the first place."

"You're behind this, aren't you? Did you arrange her 'transfer'?"

_"As if I could - and here I thought you were intelligent. All I know is she asked for reassignment. _**_You made your choice, now she's making hers._****_" She backed up slowly, keeping her M-6D trained on his right eyeball. "If you care about her at all, let her be. Don't follow her, don't look for her, don't even think about her. You've done her enough harm for one lifetime."_**

Laura's face knotted into a familiar scowl, but she quickly banished the look from her face as she headed to the gym. Shortly after her arrival, Renee Kilburn had asked for some hand-to-hand combat training, and she was looking forward to showing the sergeant a few new tricks. _If she ever meets John again, he'll be in for one NASTY surprise_, she thought as her trademark half-smile emerged.

This was going to be fun.

End
file.